

[Katie L. Persons]

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[?] M. Hamilton

Palestine City Guide

Pioneer.

Writer's Project

District #6,

Palestine, Texas [?]

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MY FIRST YEARS IN PALESTINE - Written

by Mrs. Katie L. Persons.

I was born in Tuscrumbia, Alabama, Sept. 18th, 1846. I was named for Colonel Gabral Long of New Orleans. I came to Palestine in May 1882.

When General Forrest was major in the Battle of Harrisburg he was brought to my Aunts house after he was injured. They dressed his foot on the front porch of her home, and my Aunt gave him my room for the night so he could proceed on to the army next morning. I still remember when the doctor came and dressed his foot and the bullet fell out of his foot and rolled on the floor. The next morning they put him in the brack-board and he went on even though the doctor told/ him to be still. I was only a child 12 years old at that time. Not long ago I was r reading the book "None Should Look Back," written by Charlotte Gordon

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and this very scene was described. Speaking of books I have the first edition published of "The War Poetry of the South" published in 1868.

Over fifty years ago there were no paved streets. I remember walking from where I live at present, 412 South Sycamore Street, to the railroad before I could cross over to Magnolia Street to go to Miss Harrietta Dexters, just beyond the Jewish Synagogue. The mud was ankle deep the whole length of the streets. We used kerosene oil for lighting purposes and maybe you think we didn't have good lights, we did though, and good eyes too. Now I am not wanting to go back to that made of lighting - that was our improvement on tallow candles. What would we do without electricity? We used all kinds of lamps - some very beautiful hanging lamps for our halls and parlors, some were bronze and brass bases. We housekeepers took great pride in keeping our lamps filled and burning. Every morning each lamp was cleaned, filled and the wick trimmed just so, and each lamp put in its proper place. Now, we only have to push a button and there is your light, with no work - but extra cost.

As for water there was our deep bricked up wells, water as clear as a crystal, and cold as ice. Then came a day when we had progressed so as to have city water from the water works, and another day when we had to drink and bathe in very muddy water. most wells had been filled, to the regret of many people. 2 In those days we had no picture shown, no automobiles. We hadn't forgotten how to walk. It is a long jump from those days, but a quick jump.

We had no Y.M.C.A. building. On its present site, (Which was owned by the Gould's at the time) was a vacant lot where the farmers left their wagons and teams while in town. There was forest trees to provide shade for the horses.

I think Palestine has always had a majority of good citizens, I have found it so anyway.

For many years the Episcopal Church stood on the corner where it was first built in the 70's, right where Bratton's Oak Street Drug Store is now located. The church sold that

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corner to the Link's and moved the church across the street on the present Post Office site. This property was willed to the Episcopal Church by Mr. Maxwell. There was a very nice two-story residence on the corner of Sycamore and oak that was used for the Rectory. (Mr. Andrews was our Rector at that time) He was a fine young man, and Englishmen, and he brought his bride here with him. They were with us for a good many years, but later went to Florence, Alabama. H He has passed on to his home in Heaven. While he was with us the church sold that property to the Government for a Post Office site, and the church had to be moved a second time to its present location. The church was brick veneer, with a basement. The exterior was very beautiful and was not changed. The front window, "Christ In Gothsemane" was donated by Mr. A. R. Howard in memory of his first wife, and his father. The window over the altar "The ascension of Christ" was given by the Old Woman's Guild" in love. This church was built in the 70's.

End.